

GSWPGA Terms of the Competition For 2024 GSWPGA Tournaments

The USGA Rules of Golf govern all play. These Terms of the Competition are in effect at all GSWPGA tournaments. See tournament-specific Notice to Players for modifications or additions. Local Rules at a particular course are NOT in effect, unless included on the Notice to Players.

GSWPGA players should be familiar with the most common rules, as noted below. The complete text may be found in the Official Guide to the Rules of Golf, effective January 2023.

Out of Bounds (Rule 18) – Defined by the line between the course-side points of white stakes and boundary fence posts at ground level. A ball is out of bounds when all of it lies out of bounds. Play from where previous stroke was made, with one-stroke penalty.

Penalty Areas (Rule 17) – A ball is in the penalty area when any part of the ball touches the penalty area. A penalty area defined on only one side extends to infinity. When a penalty area is connected to the out-of-bounds edge, the penalty area extends to and coincides with out of bounds. Play the ball as it lies or take penalty (one-stroke) relief. The reference point for relief from a penalty area is the point at which the ball last crossed the edge of the penalty area. Penalty relief options: 1) play from where previous stroke was made; 2) drop a ball (not nearer the hole) on a line going straight back from the hole through the reference point, with no limit on how far back on the line; 3) (red penalty areas only) drop a ball (not nearer the hole) within two club-lengths of the reference point.

Advice (Rule 10) – Players may not ask for, nor give, advice (any verbal comment or action intended to influence you or another player in choosing a club, making a stroke, or deciding how to play). To avoid the appearance of advice and in the interest of etiquette, it is suggested that conversations be in a language understood by the whole group.

Exception: Players may give and receive advice from their partners in a partner competition.

Equipment (Rule 4) – Distance measuring devices are allowed. Players are prohibited from using any device or application that provides slope or wind conditions or provides advice on which club to use.

Provisional Ball (Rule 18) – should be played to save time if a ball may be OB or lost (*not in penalty area*). Failure to announce your intent to hit a provisional means that ball becomes the ball in play. If original ball is found in bounds within 3 minutes, the provisional ball must be abandoned.

Unplayable Ball (Rule 19) - A player may deem any ball unplayable *except a ball in a penalty area*. Under penalty of one stroke you may take relief. Options: 1) drop within two club lengths (not nearer the hole) of where original ball lay (lateral relief); 2) drop a ball within one club length (not nearer the hole) of the spot from which the previous stroke was made (stroke and distance); or 3) drop a ball (not nearer the hole) on a line going straight back from the hole through the spot where the original ball lies, with no limit on how far back on the line.

Bunkers (Rule 12) - You may remove loose impediments and movable obstructions from bunkers and inadvertent contact with sand is allowable except in cases of “testing” the sand. See Rule 16 (ACC) and Rule 19 (Unplayable) for specific (free or penalty) relief options for a ball within a bunker.

Abnormal Course Conditions (Rule 16) – Free relief is allowed from interference by animal holes, ground under repair, immovable obstructions, and temporary water. Free relief is allowed for a ball embedded in the General Area. Immovable obstructions include cart paths (dirt, gravel or paved) and adjacent worn areas, landscaped areas, hole monuments, buildings, utility boxes, drain grates, sprinkler heads, and pipes.

Immovable Obstructions (Model Local Rule F-5.1) – Relief from interference by an immovable obstruction may be taken under Rule 16.1. The player has an extra option to take relief when such immovable obstructions are on or close to the putting green and on the line of play: Ball in General Area. The player may take relief under Rule 16.1b if an immovable obstruction is: on the line of play and is: 1) on or within two club-lengths of the putting green, and 2) within two club-lengths of the ball. But complete relief must be taken, which includes both physical and line of play interference.

Free Relief Procedure (Rule 14) - Determine **nearest** point of complete relief, drop from knee height within **one club length**, no nearer the hole. An incorrect drop **must** be corrected before playing the next stroke.

Resolving Rules Issues During Round (Rule 20.1c) - If a player is doubtful of her rights or the correct procedure during play of a hole she may, without penalty, complete the hole with two balls. After the doubtful situation has arisen and before taking further action, the player must announce to fellow players that she intends to play two balls and which ball she wishes to count if Rules permit. If she fails to choose which ball to count, the first ball played counts. **If the player does not report the facts of the situation to the Committee before returning her score card, she is disqualified.**

GSWPGA PACE OF PLAY

The time par for the Course is determined by course specifics including design and consultation with the lead officials, course officials and Tournament Directors in charge of the respective event.

Stroke Play Rule 5.6a; 5.6b(1,2,3). Unreasonable Delay of Play states: "A player must not unreasonably delay play, either when playing a hole or between two holes.

Each player should recognize that her pace of play is likely to affect how long it will take other players to play their rounds, including both those in the player's own group and those in following groups. Players should always play at a prompt pace throughout the round. A player should prepare in advance for the next stroke and be ready to play when it is her turn. Playing ready golf is always a good idea.

Out of Position is defined as:

The group failed to complete play of a hole by the finish time printed on their scorecard (aggregate time) AND they are more than 14 minutes behind the group in front of them measured from "flag in" to "flag in" time or more than 1-hole behind the group in front of them

The first group to start is out of position if they are behind the prescribed pace of play (10-15 minutes per hole; 4 ½ hours total).

Any following group is out of position if it:

- a) Is taking more time than the allotted time to play AND
- b) reaches the teeing ground of a:
 - Par 3 and the preceding group has cleared the next tee;
 - Par 4 and the putting green is clear
 - Par 5 and the preceding group is on the putting green.

Both a) and b) must be true for a group to be out of position.

The position of the group BEHIND has no bearing as to whether your group is out of position

Hints to Speed Up Your Game:

1. On the Tee:
 - a. Tee off as soon as the group in front is clear
 - b. Carry an extra ball in your pocket, especially if there is an OB
 - c. Short hitters hit first
 - d. Watch where each group member hits their ball
 - e. Mentally mark each straying ball by a tree or bush, to locate it faster
2. On the Fairway:
 - a. Plan your shot while walking to your ball or while others are playing
 - b. Take no more than two practice swings
 - c. Watch your ball and mentally mark its position
 - d. Move quickly to your ball, but take your time for your shot
 - e. If your ball is ahead of others, walk up the side of the fairway, safely staying out of the "line of fire"
 - f. Drop your cart passenger, then drive to your ball. OR switch drivers as necessary to be efficient
3. On the Green:
 - a. Place clubs and cart between green and next tee
 - b. Study your putt while others are putting
 - c. Use continuous putting, if possible without disturbing the line of other players
 - d. If your group is lagging behind, after holing out immediately move to the next tee and tee off
 - e. Mark scores at the next tee

You shouldn't have to be rushed or stressed about this, but just be AWARE of where your group is in relation to the group IN FRONT of you. If you practice some of the simple steps outlined above, you can usually catch up without too much trouble. One of the most impactful actions is to have the 2 finished putters go to the tee box while the other 2 putt out. Do not be afraid to tell your group they are behind and suggest taking these steps.